

The quest for material gain and engaging in risky sexual behaviour by young girls: A study in Sunnyside, Pretoria

by
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DECLARATION

By submitting this assignment electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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Abstract

Understanding sexual behaviour has become a major factor in addressing the spread of HIV. An emerging trend on the African Continent is the exchange material benefits for sexual favours from young women. Livelihood security especially in rural areas has been a driving force behind these exchanges with young women exchanging sex in order to meet basic needs of food, and shelter however various studies from Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia and including South Africa have shown that young women from urban areas have become aggressive entrepreneurs or a predatory agency in seeking out men with financial advantage in order to meet lifestyle luxuries of cellphones, cash and clothing. This study has been an investigation in the Sunnyside district of Pretoria to ascertain how far will young women go in order to meet these material benefits and will they, willingly expose themselves to risky sexual behaviour in order to gain these benefits.

Opsomming

Dit is noodsaaklik om seksuele gedrag te verstaan ten einde die MIV/Vigs pandemie suksesvol te kan aanspreek. Daar is 'n toenemende geneigdheid by jong vroue in Afrika om seksuele gunste te verruil vir materiële goedere.

Die sekuriteit van 'n bestaan is waarskynlik die grootste enkele dryfkrag agter hierdie geneigdheid, veral in die meer landelike gebiede in Afrika. Studies wat in Ghana, Nigerië, Kameroen, Ethiopië en Suid-Afrika gedoen is het aangetoon dat jong vrouens in stedelike gebiede ook al meer geneigd raak om aggressief mans met finansiële te betrek by seksuele aktiwiteite ten einde 'n luukse lewenstyl van duur selfone, duur klere en kontant te kan volhou.

Hierdie studie ondersoek bogenoemde probleem in die Sunnyside distrik in Pretoria en probeer antwoorde kry op die vraag waarom jong vroue hierdie risikos loop.

Bevindings word gerapporteer en voorstelle word gemaak.

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To all the young women of Sunnyside who participated in this study, thank you for welcoming me into your world and for sharing with me a glimpse into the realities of young women today.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background

It has been over twenty-five years since the first diagnosis of HIV and AIDS in the world, and the disease reported in just a few isolated cases in the first days, has spiraled into the biggest epidemic in modern history. Since HIV and AIDS were first discovered, an estimated 65 million people worldwide have been infected with HIV and 25 million are estimated to have died of AIDS (UNAIDS, 2006).

Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region most heavily affected by HIV. In 2010, about 68% of all people living with HIV resided in sub-Saharan Africa, a region with only 12% of the global population. Sub-Saharan Africa also accounted for 70% of new HIV infections in 2010, although there was a notable decline in the regional rate of new infections. The epidemic continues to be most severe in southern Africa, with South Africa having more people living with HIV (an estimated 5.6 million) than any other country in the world.

Almost half of the deaths from AIDS-related illnesses in 2010 occurred in southern Africa. AIDS has claimed at least one million lives annually in sub-Saharan Africa since 1998. Since then, however, AIDS-related deaths have steadily decreased, as free antiretroviral therapy has become more widely available in the region.

The total number of new HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa has dropped by more than 26%, down to 1.9 million [1.7 million–2.1 million] from the estimated 2.6 million [2.4 million–2.8 million] at the height of the epidemic in 1997. In 22 sub-Saharan countries, research shows HIV incidence declined by more than 25% between 2001 and 2009. This includes some of the world's largest epidemics in Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The annual HIV incidence in South Africa, though still high, dropped by a third between 2001 and 2009 from 2.4% [2.1%–2.6%] to 1.5% [1.3%–1.8%].

There were 2.7 million [2.4 million–2.9 million] new HIV infections in 2010, including an estimated 390 000 [340 000–450 000] among children. (UNIADS 2011)

Slightly more than half of all people living with HIV are women and girls. In sub-Saharan Africa, more women than men are living with HIV, and young women aged 15–24 years are as much as eight times more likely than men to be HIV positive (UNAIDS, 2010).

It can be seen that current HIV programming has failed these young women and because HIV is a disease spread by sex, understanding the sexual contexts and sexuality of young people will shed some light onto why the spread of the disease has not been curbed.

Given that the burden of new HIV infections in developing countries is concentrated among the young and females, there is emerging awareness that even with knowledge of how to protect oneself from infection, such information may not always be usable in daily situations of economic and social disadvantage that characterize the lives of many young people, especially females. (UNAIDS 2004)

What is not known is why, in the face of a fatal life threatening disease, young girls still engage in risky sexual behaviour?

Social and economic trends deemed to contribute to HIV risk for young people in sub-Saharan Africa include the lengthening period between childhood and adulthood, the “globalization” of youth culture, and worsening economic conditions. Shifting cultural values, poor economic prospects, and high prevalence of HIV/AIDS along with low expectations of tangible changes in the near future may bring social disillusionment and encourage some young people, particularly those who are already socially or economically marginalized, to engage in unsafe sexual and health practices (Collins and Rau 2000)

There is a selection of indicators identified for tracking of the South African epidemic, as outlined in the National Strategic Plan (2007 -2011) issued by the Department of Health (HSRC,2009):

1. Early Sexual Debut
2. Pre-marital sex
3. Multiple sexual partners
4. Sex without a condom
5. Age Disparate Relationships

What is also not known is the extent to which the “transactional nature of sex” encourages or promotes these unsafe and risky sexual behaviour (outlined above) -among young girls aged 15-24yrs?

Research conducted over the past 10 years has highlighted a major trend among young urban girls, which is the sexual exchange for material gains or commodification of sex (Lerclerc-

Madlala 2008). Young women could exploit their desirability in an effort to attract men who can provide them with expensive commodities such as jewellery, cellular phones, fashionable clothing and opportunities to be seen as passengers in luxury automobiles. Arguably, such practices are more about satisfying **“wants”** as opposed to meeting **“needs”** and may reflect a desire to **“symbol capital”** in this case symbols of a modern and successful life (Lerclerc-Madlala 2008).

1.2. Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study was to establish to what extent young girls in Sunnyside Pretoria engage in risky/ unsafe sexual practices because of the transactional nature of sex

1.3. Significance of Study

From the studies that have been conducted in other countries in Africa as well as communities in South Africa, materialistic natures and the quest for materials seems to be an emerging trend within this urban youth culture. A study to further understand this in an urban setting such as Sunnyside will highlight whether or not these issues affect the youth of Sunnyside as well. The information that will emerge from this study will be beneficial to the Faith Based Organizations and Non-governmental agencies working in the Sunnyside district to make the youth programming more effective and appropriate.

1.4 Aim

The aim of the study was to investigate to what extent young girls (19 -25 year) in Sunnyside will engage in risky/unsafe sexual practices because of the transactional nature of sex in order to communicate the dangers of risky sexual behaviours with young girls themselves, and the Churches and NGO's working in the Sunnyside area.

1.5 Objectives:

Objectives of the study were:

- To establish whether transactional nature of sex exists in Sunnyside

- To investigate whether or not young girls will engage in transactional sex (sex for the exchange of cellphones, clothes or cash)
- To understand the reasons for engagement in transactional sex
- To establish the extent of knowledge of young girls on “risky sexual behaviour”
- To provide information derived from this study to the Faith Based Organizations working in Sunnyside to address this issue appropriately

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Epidemics have their deepest foundations in 'normal' social and economic life. This is because pathways of infection are mapped on to social, cultural and economic relations between groups of human beings . . . An HIV/AIDS epidemic reveals many of the fractures, stresses and strains in a society. HIV/AIDS is but a symptom of the way in which we organize our social and economic relations."

Barnett, T and A Whiteside (2002)

For the first time in history, there are more people living in cities than in rural areas. And the numbers are growing rapidly – each month, five million people are added to the cities of the developing world. We can estimate that by 2030 approximately 1.5 billion girls will live in cities. This rapid urbanization means that violence against girls in slums and on the streets is growing as well. Extreme poverty and homelessness push adolescent girls in particular into begging, transactional sex and other forms of exploitation in order to survive. (PLAN, 2010)

Social and economic trends deemed to contribute to HIV risk for young people in sub-Saharan Africa include the lengthening period between childhood and adulthood, the “globalization” of youth culture, and worsening economic conditions. Shifting cultural values, poor economic prospects, and high prevalence of HIV/AIDS along with low expectations of tangible changes in the near future may bring social disillusionment and encourage some young people, particularly those who are already socially or economically marginalized, to engage in unsafe sexual and health practices (Collins and Rau 2000).

Young people aged 15–24 years are at the forefront of the epidemic. They accounted for 41% of all new HIV infections among adults in 2009; 5 million (4 300 000–5 900 000) young women and men were then living with HIV. Young women are particularly vulnerable to HIV, and they disproportionately account for 64% of HIV infections among young people worldwide (UNAIDS, 2011).

Adolescence is often a period marked by scant economic resources, high demand for material goods, and high levels of peer influence and pressure. In many sub-Saharan African countries, especially in the southern region, adolescence and young adulthood is also the age group in which HIV infection is spreading the most rapidly (U.S. Census Bureau 1999).

According to Lerclerc-Madlala (2008), South Africa as a nation has become obsessed with the glamorous lifestyles portrayed by the stars. South Africans mad rush towards all that glitters, tingles and titillates will ensure high HIV/AIDS rates for the foreseeable future.

The literature review has been conducted too investigate further the transactional nature of sex and what does this actually mean, does it exist in the world and how does this relate to spread of HIV and AIDS.

2.1.1 Transactional Sex

The sexual market place of buyers, sellers, and “products” involves women and men as old as 60, or even 70 and older, and children as young as 7 or 8. It includes adults who make a conscious choice to *sell* sex as a means of earning a livelihood, as well as individuals whose decisions to enter a sexual relationship and whose choice of partner are predicated on the receipt of material resources, what is often referred to as “casual sex”. It involves children who are forced into sex work through becoming refugees in wars, those sold to dealers or brothel owners by poor parents, as well as those who are downright stolen. While most of the people who exchange, sell, or are offered for sex are female, increasingly men (and boys) are offering themselves (or being offered) for sex. Involved in the sex industry are small time pimps and brokers, brothel owners, local people sex tourists from developed countries, organized crime rings, but also parents, spouses and other family members who knowingly

Or unknowingly push their daughters and sons into the enterprise. (Ampofo, 2001)

Severe inequalities appear to be a pre-condition for epidemics as eviscerating and apparently unremitting as those experienced in Southern Africa, where intersecting forms of inequalities define social relations . . . the overlap of gender and socioeconomic inequalities is especially harsh in South Africa where many women depend on social grants, remittances from male partners and other kin, and other inconsistent and informal sources of income. All this has further weakened women’s economic status, aggravating gender inequalities and exacerbating their exposure to HIV risk. Driven by relative poverty, many women and girls find themselves using sex as a commodity in exchange for goods, services, money, accommodation and other basic

necessities; transactional sex reflects the superior economic position and access to resources men generally enjoy (Marais, 2005).

Research carried out by Hunter (2002) describes the close relationship between sex and gifts—resulting in what has been called “transactional sex”. Transactional sex differs from prostitution but has many similarities as well—with multiple partners and underscored by gifts or cash. But differs in important ways in that participants are considered “girlfriends” and “boyfriends” (Hunter 2002).

The subject of sex and the way it is “exchanged”, has long interested anthropologists, sociologists, theologians and bio-medical researchers. While in some societies in historical times the practice (of sexual intercourse) has been elevated to the level of religious ritual, in others, today, it has been so commodified as to deprive it of any apparent sanctity. The social organization of sexual exchange takes a variety of forms in different historical and cultural contexts and political economies so that we cannot speak of any universal form.

Low socioeconomic status not only increases female odds of exchanging sex for money or goods, it also raises female chances of experiencing coerced sex, and male and female odds of having multiple sexual partners in the year before the survey; it lowers female chances of secondary abstinence in the year before the survey, female and male age at sexual debut, condom use at last sex, and communication with most recent sexual partner about sensitive topics. Low socioeconomic status has more consistent negative effects on female than on male sexual behaviors; it also raises female risk of early pregnancy. (Hallman, 2000)

Force or coercion are often a part of sexual relationships in South Africa, especially among adolescents. This coercion is also often pinioned by an economic exchange: gifts or favours for sex. Studies have pointed out the negative consequences of the exchanges which are often characterized by large age differences (‘sugar daddies’) or power imbalances. Perhaps more pervasive but largely ignored, gift-giving in same-age relationships also may be associated with sexual leverage, an exchange which somehow entitles one partner physical and sexual rights to the other’s body. The circumstances surrounding gifts and favours may shape young women’s and men’s sexual experiences, their ability to negotiate the circumstances of those encounters, and the possibility of concluding or remoulding a relationship into another form. Simple gifts exchanged between an adolescent boy and a girl of the same age may also influence the pace and

progress of that relationship. In short, the circumstances surrounding gifts and favors may shape young women's and men's sexual experiences, their ability to negotiate the circumstances of those encounters, and the possibility of ending a relationship or remolding it into another form. Gift giving often sets the parameters of sexual experiences for adolescents, with serious implications for pregnancy and the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. In South Africa, where adolescent parenthood is widespread and the prevalence of HIV daunting, gifts may have life-altering—or life-threatening—implications. Yet, the everyday nature of gift giving, its widespread practice, and the fact that it can be undertaken for reasons other than sexual ones, for example altruism or trust, have camouflaged its importance: we know little about gifts and the role they might play in the lives of adolescents. (Kaufman and Stavrou, 2002).

In relation to the material environment, many youth live in a context characterized by poverty and women are often engaged in transactional sex, to meet basic needs or for conspicuous consumption, the latter needing to be seen within the culture of globalization and consumerism. Within this milieu, men, who usually have more access to money than women, “buy” sex and are therefore usually in control of the conditions of sex, for example whether a condom is used (Selikow, 2004).

Because of the privileged economic position of men, rooted in their access to most lucrative segments of the formal and informal economy as well as to resources such as housing and vehicles, they tend to be in a more esteemed level because of the unequal access to resources. These inequalities provide a material basis for transactional sex. Research conducted over the past 10 years has highlighted a major trend among young urban girls, which is sexual exchange for material gains or commodification of sex (Lerclerc-Madlala 2008).

What exists currently is a continuum of transactional sex – where women engage in transactional sex for a variety of reasons and some as helpless victims to meet basic needs on the one end, and others as a predatory agency trying to meet wants on the other end.

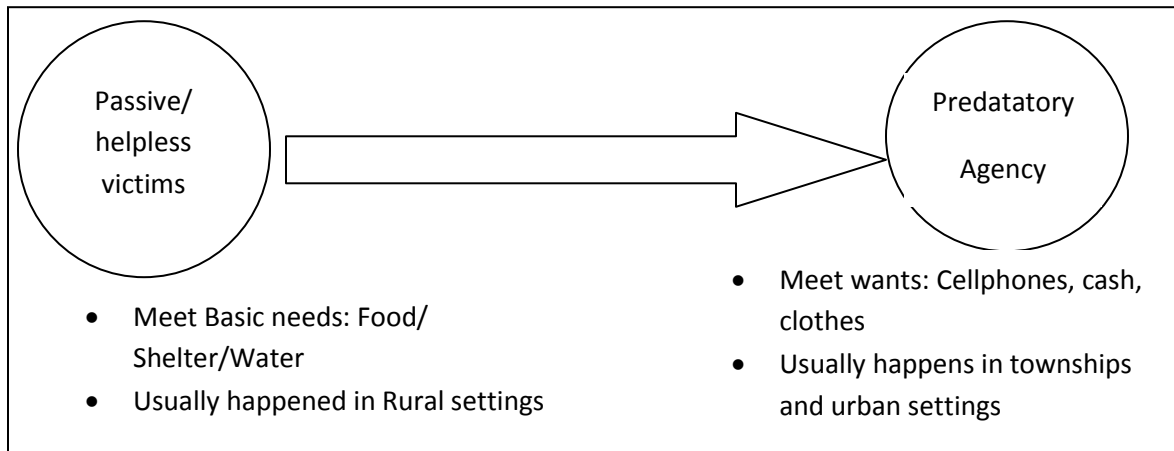


Diagramme 1: A diagrammatic illustration of the above concept.

Focus of this study: Transactional Sex for wants

Living in the South African urban areas at least, many young people today have their basic needs for food, shelter and other services largely met by the parents or other older caregivers. For many women in these communities exchanging sex for financial or lifestyle rewards is an important part of their orientations towards sexual encounters, and often has little to do with being poor. Here the words prostitution or survival sex misrepresent the character of the relationships where implicit understandings link material expectation to sex and are not entirely separate from everyday life.

In many settings, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, even small gifts may hold economic value too attractive to decline. Gifts coupled with fierce social pressure to have a boyfriend or girlfriend and be sexually active may prove to be a disconcerting duo. If a girl accepts a gift from her partner, does this mean she has accepted the relationship as a sexual one? Or that she has abdicated her rights to negotiate the terms of the sexual relationship?

Several studies have been carried out in various African countries investigating these issues of the transactional exchanges of sex:

Study carried out in Kenya:

In a study carried out in Kenya, participants in a focus group discussion explained that although some young women have legitimate financial needs and seek assistance from older partners,

most want luxuries such as trendy clothing, body lotion, or outings to expensive restaurants that they cannot otherwise afford or that their parents refuse to provide. Some participants noted that “special treats” such as chips, biscuits, ice cream, or chicken are sometimes enough to entice young women into encounters with older men (Longfield 2003).

For most women, especially the unemployed, the motives were purely financial since support from boyfriends was a major albeit precarious means of livelihood. The following respondents confirm the central role of exchange in relationships: “I am not working and that is the only way I can get money to buy things. How can a girl live without getting anything from a relationship?” (18-year-old unemployed); “I expect money and other things. After all what are relationships about then? Men are supposed to provide money and other things needed. If you don’t have money why do you take a girlfriend in the first place?” (20-year-old “dop bar” attendant); “You see, I have to take a boyfriend who will be in a position to look after me and provide the things I need. So far I have received dresses, shoes, and clothes” (18-year-old petty trader) (Longfield 2003).

A Study in Uganda:

A study carried out by the Medical Research Council with school pupils aged 14 to 18, reveals that money plays an important role in negotiation of sexual relationships among these adolescents. In the girls’ perception of the sexual relationships with boys, there must be some sort of material gain, especially a monetary one. In the case of platonic relationships, boys give girls and other gifts but money. Money is an indicator of sexual interest on the boys’ part. Girls said they use the money received in exchange for sex to buy clothes, shoes, underwear, food, cosmetics and to buy gifts to send to boys. Girls said they were afraid and embarrassed to ask their parents to provide articles such as clothes, shoes, underwear, creams and soaps because the need for such products might suggest that they are making themselves attractive in order to seduce men. Sometimes the money is also used to pay school fees and transport. Money obtained in exchange for sex is therefore used partly to satisfy felt needs that parents don’t consider important (Nyanzi 2001).

Nnko and Pool (1997) also find that money and rewards are extremely important in sexual relationships among adolescents in Tanzania, and indeed that sex does not occur without economic exchange in some form. They assert that both boys and girls are well aware of these

dynamics and are adept at seeing through deception and negotiating good exchanges. In short, they assert that force is an ambiguous concept in the face of the economic valuation of any relationship. In these studies, girls (and sometimes boys) report that they prefer partners who are economically able to support them.

A Study in Kwa-Zulu Natal -South Africa:

A study carried out by Lerclerc-Madlala (2004) revealed that young girls are increasingly using sex to bargain for non-essentials such as fashion items and make-up. A comment from a 16 year old girl, one of the research participants, indicated that she wasn't receiving anything from the relationship not even make-up from Clicks, so she had to break up with him. While exchanges of gifts with sexual strings attached have been going on for centuries, these three studies confirm women approach transactional relations not as passive victims, but as aggressive entrepreneurs.

Another Study in Kwa Zulu Natal South Africa:

A growing body of research has explored the relationships between coercion, sex, and possible outcomes such as disease transmission or unwanted pregnancy among adolescents. These studies tend to take coercion (and violence) or the threat of it as the point of departure for their research questions, and with good reason. Educational campaigns and reproductive health choices in contraception are useless if young men and women feel that sex on their partners' terms is the only alternative to violence.

Wood and Jewkes (1997), for example, found in their discussions with black teenage girls in a South African township¹ that few were in relationships that did not involve physical violence. In fact, coercion and violence were so common that many of these young women understood it as an expression of love. The researchers found that sex among adolescents often involved very little negotiation or communication. Condom use is a particularly difficult topic among youth since it connotes unfaithfulness and uncleanness, and many girls reported a fear of retribution for initiating a conversation on the topic (Varga and Makabulo 1996; Varga 1997).

2.2 Risky Sexual behaviour because of transactional nature of sex

High risk or risky sexual behaviour is outlined as behaviour that puts a person in a vulnerable position to unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS risk. The following behaviours are considered risky:

2.2.1 Early sexual debut

This is the age at which young people become sexually active and consequently the age at which they are risky on contracting HIV (HSRC, 2009).

The age at which young people become sexually active affects their risk of acquiring HIV and other STIs, and their risk of unintended or unsafe pregnancy. A special study of four African countries found poverty to be associated with early sexual debut, particularly among young women. HIV prevention programmes encouraging young people to wait longer to become sexually active will not only contribute to reducing the number of new infections but also protect young people's reproductive health by reducing the risk of contracting STIs, delaying the age of first delivery, and reducing the chance of poor maternal health outcomes for young women.(UNAIDS,2011)

Sexual debut remains a crucial factor in vulnerability of youth to HIV infection. A study carried out in South Africa revealed that a very small proportion of young people had started having sex before the age of 15 years. However younger girls are being targeted by older men for sex, especially if these young girls are virgins (HRSC, 2008).

With the promise of money and the lure of material gain many are girls are starting to initiate sexual relations while still at high school.

2.2.2 Pre-marital sex

Sexual encounters between individuals who are not married and this lead to different sexual encounters when relationships ends and one begins (HSRC, 2009)

On the whole, while traditionally premarital sexual intercourse had been permitted in most societies, it has arrived as an influence of modernization. The force of social change resulting from formal education, increasing urbanization, and the monetarization of traditional subsistence economic systems, among other things, has blended to produce changes in sexual culture. In Ghana today, it is clear that even in societies where premarital sex was not formerly permitted, it is now considered normal (Ankomah, 1999). In most parts of urban Ghana, premarital sexual relationships are contracted with pecuniary considerations in mind. Economic pressures, among other things, provide the background for most premarital sexual relationships. To understand the sexual lifestyles and relationships of young women, it is helpful to view premarital sexual relationships as basically transactional: sexual services are exchanged for material gains (Ankomah, 1999).

Meekers and Calvès (1997) report that for their study participants in Cameroon, economic support was a major reason for premarital sex among girls, but also among some boys (who were seeing –sugar mummies”) and many young adults have no means to support themselves except through gifts from boyfriends or girlfriends.

The giving and accepting of university lodging at an on-campus residence was said to be a prevalent form of gift giving and receiving among –out-of-town” students at universities and technikons. Essentially female students would accept free lodging at campus residences from older male students (and in some cases from lecturers or dormitory supervisors) in return for being in a –resident relationship” with the man. Sex was an integral component of that relationship. Respondents also claimed there were cases of female students who went through a three-year degree or diploma program by embarking on such –resident relationships” for the sake of ensuring on-campus accommodation. A rough calculation of various case studies revealed that, on average, female students who embarked on such activities changed –resident relationships” once a semester. Thus it was perfectly normal for a student completing a three-year degree or diploma program within the specified time period to have –at least one dozen resident relationships.” Participants also claimed that male students had lists of these girls and that an informal –transfer system” operated among men, who would –swap” sex partners at informal trading sessions.

2.2.3 Multiple Sexual Partners

Concurrent sexual partnerships, where relationships in time, overlap (HSRC, 2009).

Multiple partnerships put young people at an increased risk of contracting HIV and other STIs, and of having unintended and unsafe pregnancies. Young women in particular are vulnerable to having multiple sexual partnerships for socioeconomic reasons and may have sexual partners who are five years older or more. Having sex with a much older partner can put young women at increased risk of HIV infection. (UNAIDS, 2011)

A masculine discourse seems to place a higher value on men who have multiple sexual partners than a man who is in a monogamous relationship. Instead of seeing these masculinities as demonstrating some kind of innate African promiscuity as some accounts on AIDS imply, this article argues that sexualities are unstable and are produced through men and women's practical engagement with shifting economic, cultural and spatial conditions and relations (Lerclerc-Madlala (2007).

Indeed, youth confirmed that not having any girlfriends, or only having one girlfriend, is viewed as abnormal, while having many increases the status of males. Thus the language of *ingagara* as a "real man" and *isithipa* as "sleeping" or "dumb person" encourages a sexuality of promiscuity and multiple partners. As multiple partners have become such a norm in the township, a special discourse has developed to refer to female partners in such relationships. Within multiple relationships, there are two main categories of girlfriends, the "cherrie" (sometimes called the "makwapheni") and the "egte," as well as a one night stand, although this is less common. (Selikow, 2004)

In Kwa-Zulu Natal, young women spoke jokingly of the "need" for several ministers in their lives; a minister of transport (the guy with the luxury car who drives her around); a minister of housing (the guy who pays rent for her apartment); a Minister of finance (the guy who gives her money); minister of entertainment (the guy who take her out to parties) and finally minister without portfolio (a general good time guy), he could be the one that a person actually liked or loved (Lerclerc-Madlala 2008).

Another study reported the both African male and female respondents also argued that there were particular “types of girls” of their age group who shared male partners among them. Here the inverse relationship occurs, where girls either “trade” or “lend” boyfriends depending on what they themselves sought at a given moment. Depending on the wealth or status of the men in question, they were labeled accordingly. A man with a good car who did not mind using it to provide transportation was a “Minister of Transport,” whose primary task would be to drive the girl to places she would like to visit. Given the nature of settlement patterns in South Africa, it was not uncommon for a girl to trade sex with a man if he was prepared to take her to visit relatives in distant towns or rural areas. Such sex did not occur at the point of visit but only on the safe return back home. A “Minister of Finance” is a provider of “pocket money” for the intention of purchasing clothing or perfume. A “Minister of Education” is a man who pays fees, purchases books, or provides accommodation at a residence. Such “ministers” tend to proliferate during the middle of the academic year and just before graduation, which can only take place if the student has settled her account with the institution she has attended. “Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Tourism” are usually in high demand during the long vacation periods, but may also be sought out whenever women seek a change of scenery. Exchange of sex for such “favors” is seen as being quite common and is not restricted to a particular age or socioeconomic group, although respondents argued that when women married, the various “ministers” fall out of their lives. Throughout this entire period there is the “Straight Minister,” the one man who is regarded as the lover of her life and who does not have to exchange favors or money for her company. Many of the African men accepted the situation and did not consider themselves as being “used.” (Hallman, 2002)

It can be said that maintaining multiple partners at the same time is fairly common, with around 25 percent of single women having more than one partner at a time (Anarfi 2003). However, by far the most common characteristic of premarital sexual relationships is partner switching, and with it short duration of sexual relationships.

2.2.4 Sex without a condom

Using condoms consistently and correctly is an effective HIV prevention strategy to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV, other STIs and unintended pregnancy; thus advocating for the use

of condoms among young people with multiple sexual partners is an important component of behaviour-change communication programmes (UNAIDS, 2011).

Although both male and female condoms are available in South Africa, there is low usage, inconsistent usage and non-use of condoms noted among young people (HSRC, 2009).

When money or gift transfers are a dominant element in a relationship, studies have indicated that men in these relationships often view their involvement with young women as primarily transactional, and are therefore not willing to use condoms (Leclerc-Madlala 2008). A study carried out in Kwa-Zulu Natal reported that condom use was entirely the man's decision (Leclerc-Madlala 2004).

The responses regarding condom use were alarming in light of the ever-growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa today. Respondents were asked what would happen if a girl is given a gift but she wants her partner to wear a condom and he refuses.

African females felt that if they ~~wanted~~ "to see the man again, then the issue of condoms ~~becomes~~ a nonissue and you take your chances." But, unless they ~~really~~ knew the guy," they would insist on the use of condoms. Respondents argued that men often got argumentative about the use of condoms and sometimes ended up ~~slapping~~ the woman around." Indeed, men felt that if a girl accepted a gift just before lovemaking or agreed to a gift afterward, then she was denying herself the right to ask a man to use a condom. Men also claimed that girls who come from ~~rural~~ areas" are less sophisticated and were easily seduced ~~even~~ by worthless gifts," allowing themselves to be completely manipulated. Others stated that some women who want to ~~catch~~ a guy" would pretend to agree not to use a condom, especially after being offered a gift of sorts, but that in reality she manipulated the situation in order to become pregnant. African males, argued that condom use was restrictive and that they would prefer to have sex without one, but in this day and age they could not take chances with someone they did not know. After a few ~~sessions~~," however, they would ~~expect~~ the woman to agree with them and drop the demand to use

condoms. If the woman did not consent, they would not date her again. None of the men felt they would use gift giving as a means of encouraging a woman to drop her demands to use a condom. But they did argue that if they had spent a lot of money ~~entertaining~~ the woman, then

they would be aggrieved if she did not consent to sex. African male respondents were quick to argue that older men, particularly those “from out of town,” sought out young women (described as 15–16-year-olds) to have sex without the use of condoms. These men would offer gifts, usually clothing, shoes, perfume, or money. Younger African girls agreed that this was one of the major reasons for not wanting to have sex with older men; however, if they were to be offered a large “bus fare,” then they might consent to their male partner’s not using a condom (Hallman, 2002).

2.2.5 Age disparate Relationships (Sugar Daddies)

Young girls having sexual relationships with men who are older than them by five years (HSRC, 2009).

There is increasing evidence of sex between young girls and older men from South African studies (Lerclerc-Madlala 2008). These relationships are mostly based on material gains and in some cases sanctioned by families who benefit directly and indirectly financially for these relationships (HRSC 2008).

A man’s ability to attract and maintain a coterie of women has for eons been an index of manhood and a mainstay of patriarchal privilege in our sexist world. In modern day South Africa, such measures of manhood are very much alive and well. In the context of HIV/AIDS infection rates, the power-women-prestige complex is a cause for concern. A man who cruises the country’s urban ghettos in a shiny luxury car, accessorized with a cellphone on the dashboard and a chunky gold-ringed hand on the steering wheel, knows exactly what and who will look his way (Lerclerc-Madlala 2008).

Research tells us it is not only the material benefits that girls are only after in their pursuit of sexual liaisons with these sugar daddies. Just the prestige derived from being seen in his expensive car is often enough, or the status that comes from being associated with Mr. So and so (Leclerc-Madlala, 2004). Many of the expectations of the girls from these sugar daddies or boyfriends are perceived needs and not really basic needs. These include cellphones, cash, clothing, cars, these wants are the now needs of the urban young society (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008).

Many studies exploring coercion or force in relationships have sought to situate the relationships within the context of power imbalances and large age differentials, and in this way have touched

on the role of gifts. Relationships with older men (~~–~~sugar daddies”) and teachers are perhaps the power-imbalanced attachments most frequently considered.

In the former case, wealthier older men, often ~~–~~family” men who are married and have children, give money, transport, or other gifts to young women as an explicit part of a sexual relationship. While few condone these types of relationships, research has suggested that girls and sometimes boys pursue them as a ~~–~~rite of passage” (Dinan 1983), or as a means to economic survival, security, and/or maturity (Meekers and Calvès 1997; Kaufman et al. 2001; Silberschmidt and Rasch 2001). Sexual liaisons between teachers and students are another type of power-imbalanced relationship that has received greater attention in recent years. Mensch and Lloyd (1998), for example, describe a climate found in many of the Kenyan schools in their sample as being hostile to girls in part because of teacher harassment of students. Quite often that harassment takes the form of a sexual relationship in exchange for passing marks or help with homework; in the worst instances, sex with students occurs because of threats of a failing grade. Of note is that both boys and girls have been subject to this form of harassment in schools.

Sexual Violence

African females maintained that gift giving for sexual favors is an insult and males sometimes become violent if they feel insulted. They maintained, however, that if communication is good, girls do not get beaten. African males admitted to sometimes becoming angry and forceful, if a girlfriend made them feel foolish. Generally, most men claimed that they would not ~~–~~deliberately” set out to hit a woman, but admitted that it did happen and should not be condoned (Hallman, 2002).

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research design

This was a qualitative study which included 20 young women between the ages of 19-26 years that have been residing or working in Sunnyside for more than two years, who were asked to fill in a structured questionnaire. The young girls have been selected purposively which included young girls who came for counseling at the Hope Centre-Sunnyside Branch office. Thereafter a snowballing method was used with girls already interviewed referring others for interviews.

3.2 Measures

The measuring instrument was an in depth structured questionnaire which covered the following themes:

Theme 1:

What is the financial security of the interviewees and how are their livelihood requirements met?

Theme 2:

Does the motivation for material gain encourage girls to have sexual relations early?

Does the promise of money and the lure of material gains encourage girls to initiate sexual relations earlier than usual?

Theme 3:

Does the motivation of material gain encourage girls to engage in pre-marital sex?

Theme 4:

Does the motivation for material gain encourage multiple sexual partners in order to meet a continuum of wants and needs?

Theme 5:

Does the motivation for material gain cause young girls to not have negotiating power in the sexual relationship?

Theme 6:

Does the motivation for material gain cause young girls to get involved with older men?

3.3. Ethical Considerations

3.3.1 Informed consent procedures

All youth who agreed to participate provided written consent. Furthermore, a witness also signed the consent form to certify that informed consent had been given willingly by the participant.

3.3.2 Procedures to ensure confidentiality

All youth participated in the research was ensured of confidentiality. And assurance was given on proper storage of completed questionnaires.

3.3.3 Other Ethical Considerations

In order to make sure that the research was conducted according to the highest ethical standards, the following additional measures were used:

The questionnaire began by outlining the purpose of the study and for the specific use of the results for clarification for the participants. The broad themes were outlined in detail for the participant to fully understand fully the nature of the study focus area. Thereafter the participants were assured of confidentiality for their responses.

3.4 Fieldwork procedures

The fieldwork was conducted in the period from End July 2011 to the Beginning of October 2011. The only researcher was Elaine Jacob who conducted research out of the Hope Centre Counseling Office in Sunnyside. Young women who attended the centre for counseling were asked of their willingness to participate in study. The purpose of the study and use of the findings was explained beforehand to each participant. And confidentiality was agreed to. Those who agreed were asked to provide informed consent to be interviewed.

3.5 Data management and analysis

Data was double captured into an excel spreadsheet and the SPSS Statistic software system. Data inconsistencies in terms of inappropriate responses were recorded as missing. Other internal inconsistencies were left intact, reflecting the right of the persons to refuse to answer particular questions.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Demographic Data

From Table 4.1 we can deduce that the sample constituted one hundred percent (100%) female with an average age of 23years. Only five percent (5%) responded as being married with ninety five percent (95%) of the female respondents being single. All respondents were African with seventy five (75%) South African, fifteen percent (15%) Zimbabwean, and ten percent (10%), other African nationalities.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of sample

Demographics			
		no.	%
Sex			
	female	20	100.00
	Male	0	0.00
	total	20	100.00
Age in years			
	0-14	0	0.00
	15-24	14	70.00
	25-26	6	30.00
	27-49	0	0.00
	50+	0	0.00
	total	20	100.00
Marital status			
	single	19	95.00
	married	1	5.00
	total	20	100.00
Race			
	African	20	100.00
	White	0	
	Coloured	0	
	Indian	0	
	Other	0	
	total	20	100.00
Nationality			
	South Africa	15	75.00
	Zimbabwe	3	15.00
	Other	2	10.00
	total	20	100.00

Table 4.2 shows that eighty percent (80%) of respondents reported living in Sunnyside Pretoria, with thirty three percent (31%) living in Sunnyside one year or less and fifty percent (50%) living in Sunnyside between two to five years and eighteen percent living in Sunnyside for between five and ten years. The other twenty percent of respondents did not reside in Sunnyside but were working in Sunnyside between one and three years.

Table 4.2: Respondents living in Sunnyside

		n	%
Living in Sunnyside	yes	16	80.00
	no	4	20.00
	total	20	100.00
Duration in Sunnyside	0-1yrs	5	31.25
	1-3yrs	4	25.00
	3-5yrs	4	25.00
	5-10 yrs	3	18.75
	10+yrs	0	0.00
	total	16	100.00

Table 4.3 shows that all respondents that reside in Sunnyside live in apartments with ninety three percent (93%) living in shared apartments and six percent (6%) living alone in an apartment. Thirty eight percent (38%) of respondents sharing these apartments with friends, thirty one percent (31%) sharing apartments with family and twenty five percent (25%) sharing apartments with strangers (people they didn't know before living together).

Table 4.3: Living arrangements in Sunnyside

		n	%
Living arrangements	Live in an apartment	1	6.25
	live in a shared apartment	15	93.75
	Live in a house	0	0.00
	total	16	100.00
Sharing apartment with	Friends	6	37.50
	Family	5	31.25
	Boyfriend		0.00
	Husband	1	6.25

	strangers sharing rooms	4	25.00
	total	16	100.00

4.2 Financial Data

Figure 4.1 shows that sixty percent (60%) of the respondents reported that their family pays the rental at their apartments while thirty five percent (35%) reported to paying their rentals themselves and five percent (5 %) reported that a boyfriend pays their rental.

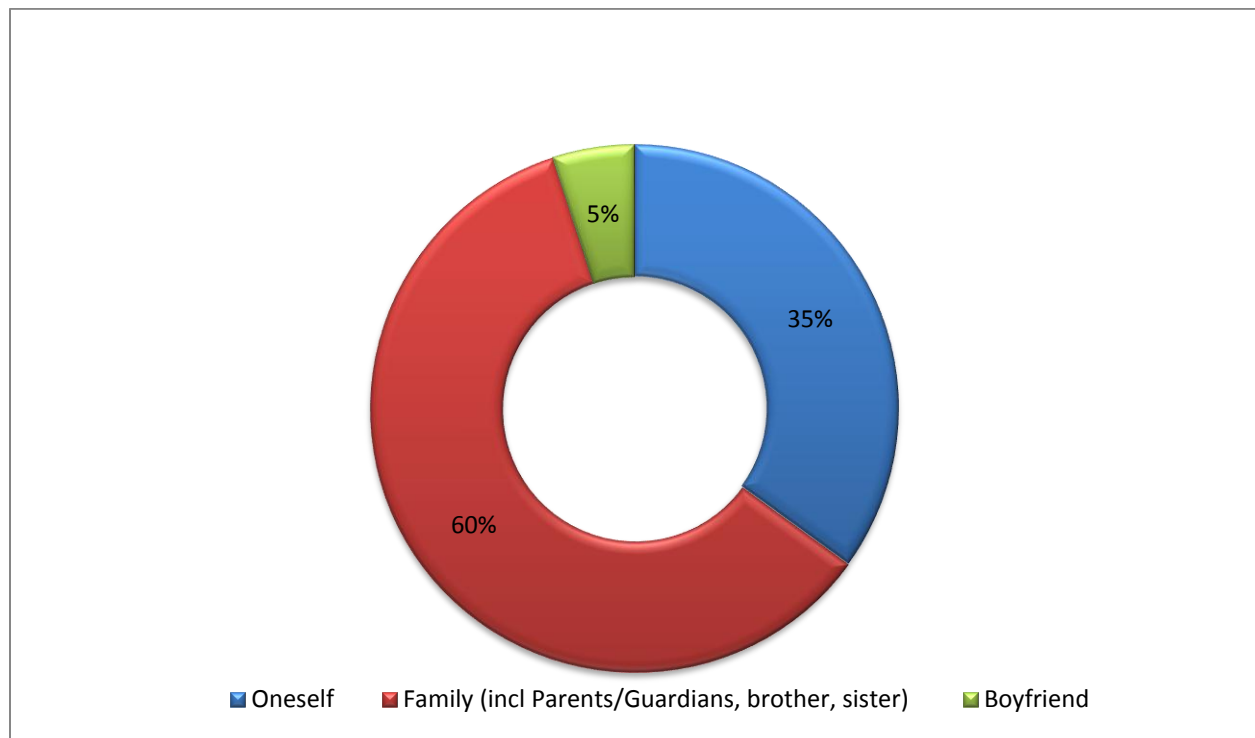


Figure 4.1: Who is responsible for rental expenses at your apartment?

When asked how much money is required to cover financial expenses excluding rental expenses thirty percent (30%) of respondents reported requiring between one thousand to two thousand Rands per month. While forty five percent (45%) of the respondents require between two to three thousand Rands per month, fifteen percent (15%) of respondents require between three thousand and five thousand per month and ten percent (10%) require more than five thousand Rands per month. See Figure 4.2 for illustration of data.

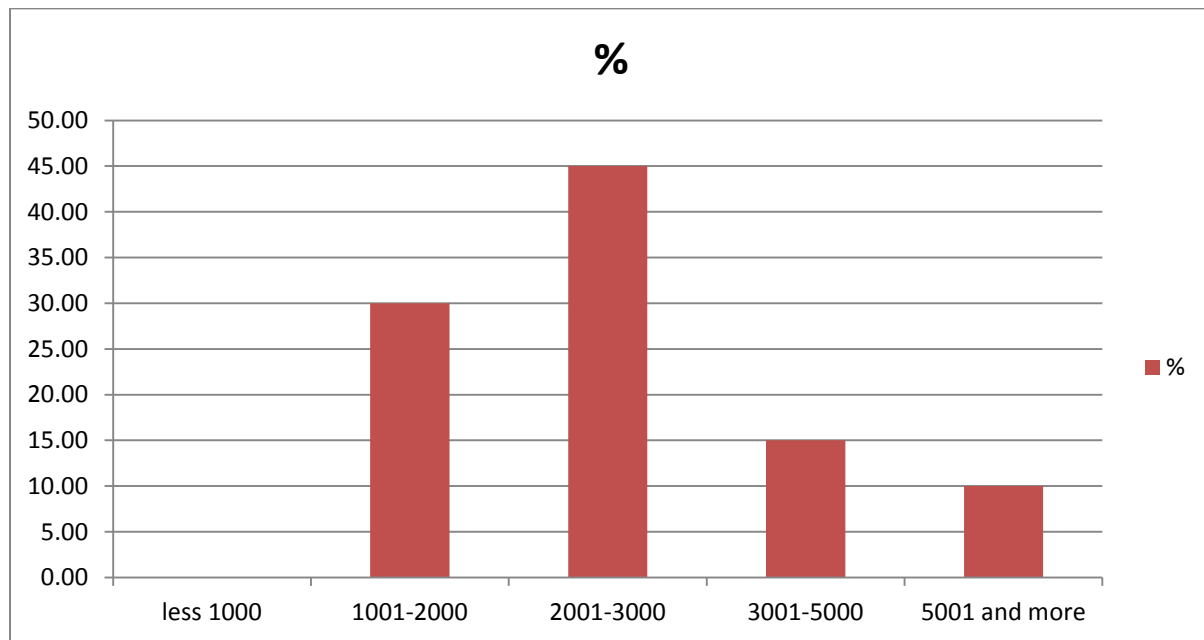


Figure 4.2: Monthly financial requirements

Figure 4.3 illustrates that sixty one percent (61%) of the respondents reported having a job that covers their financial expenses while eight percent (8%) cover financial expenses from receiving money from parents. Eight percent (8%) reported boyfriends covering financial expenses. Fifteen percent (15%) cover their expenses through multiple sources such as parents and having a job while eight percent (8%) covering expenses from having a job, receiving money from parents and receiving money from a boyfriend and friends.

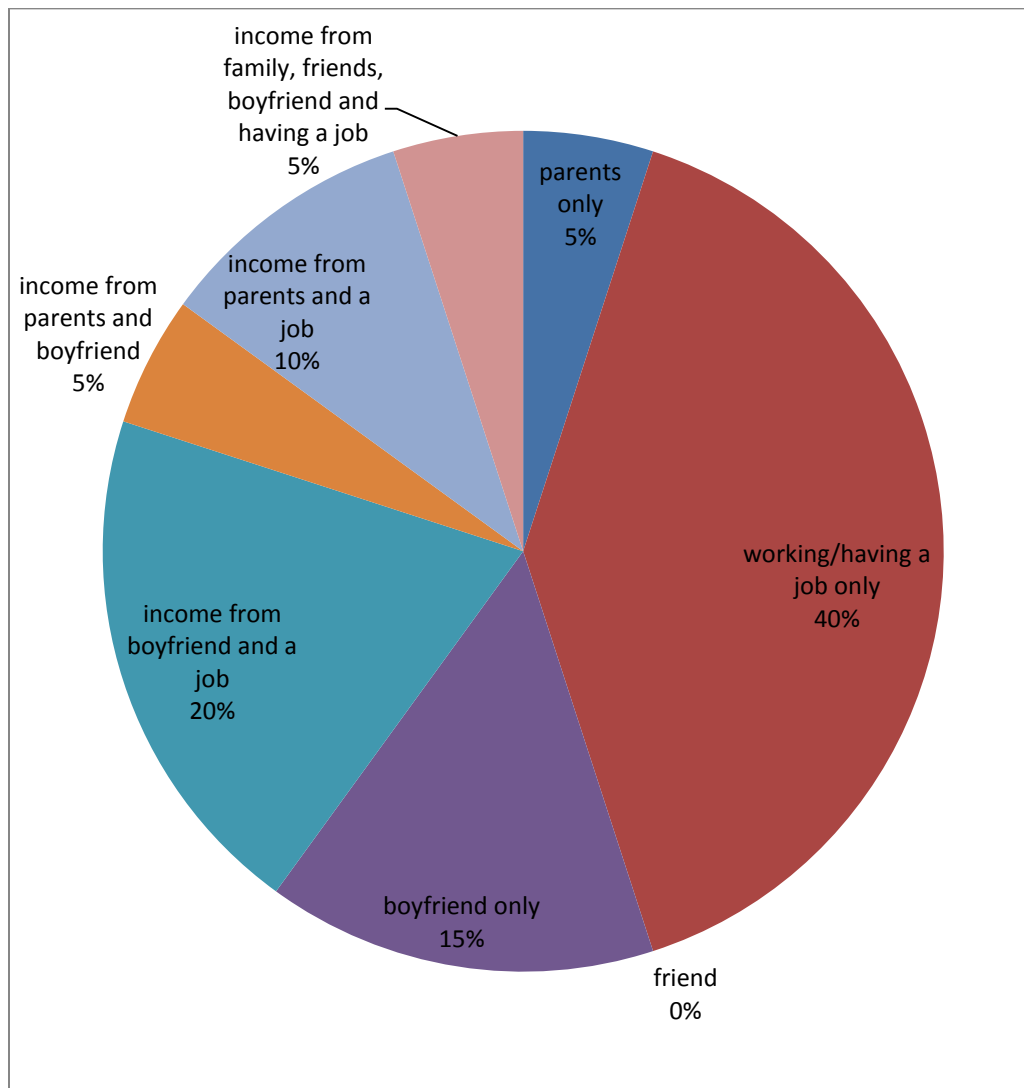


Figure 4.3: How are financial requirements met?

4.3 Sexual Behavior Data

As figure 4.4 and 4.5 illustrate ninety five percent (95%) of respondents reported having been sexually active, with sixty five percent (65%) having had their first sexual encounter under the age of nineteen.

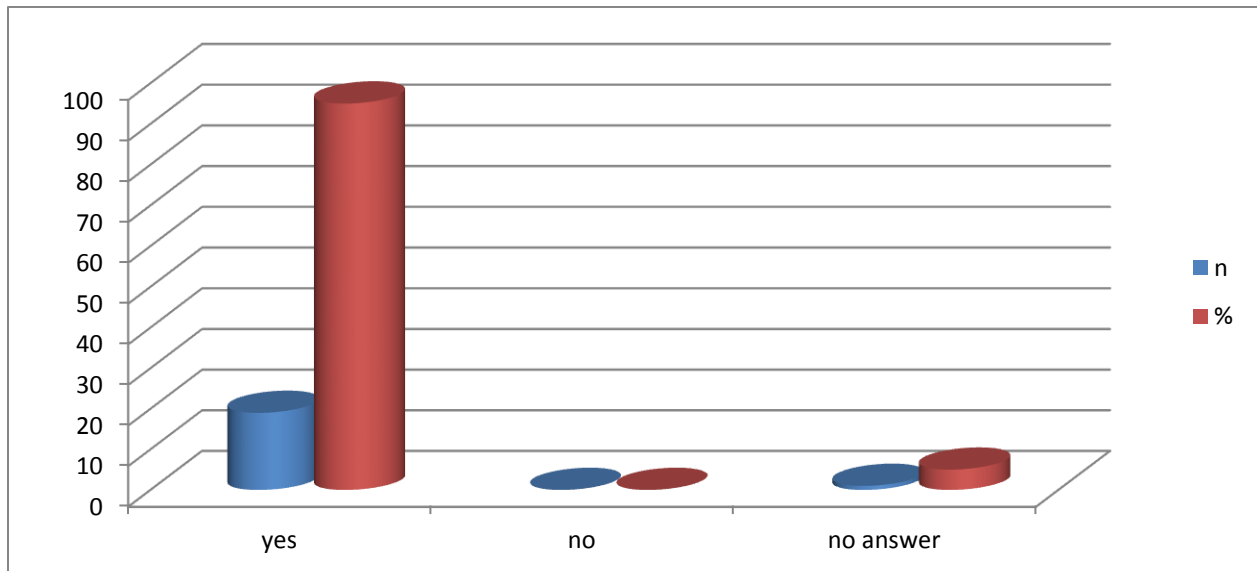


Figure 4.4: Respondents have had sex before

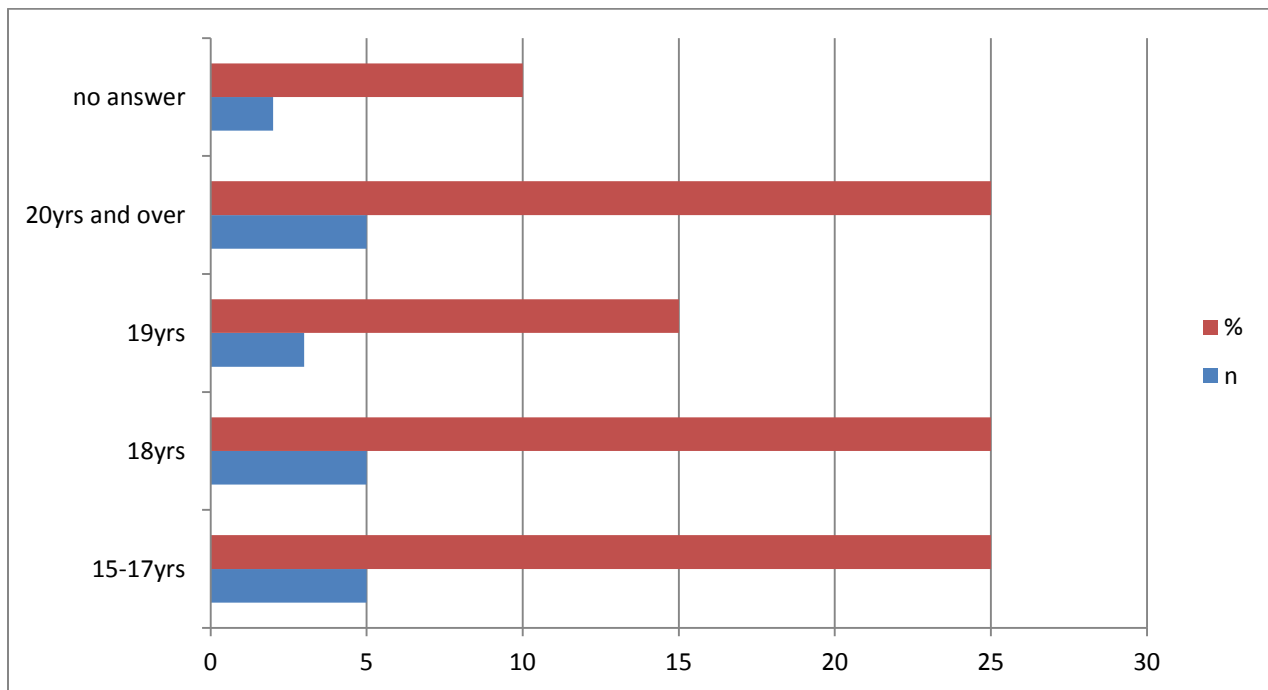


Figure 4.5: Age of first sexual encounter

Figure 4.6 shows that only twenty percent (20%) of respondents report that they are still with sexual partner of their first sexual encounter, with seventy percent (70%) reporting not to be with same partner.

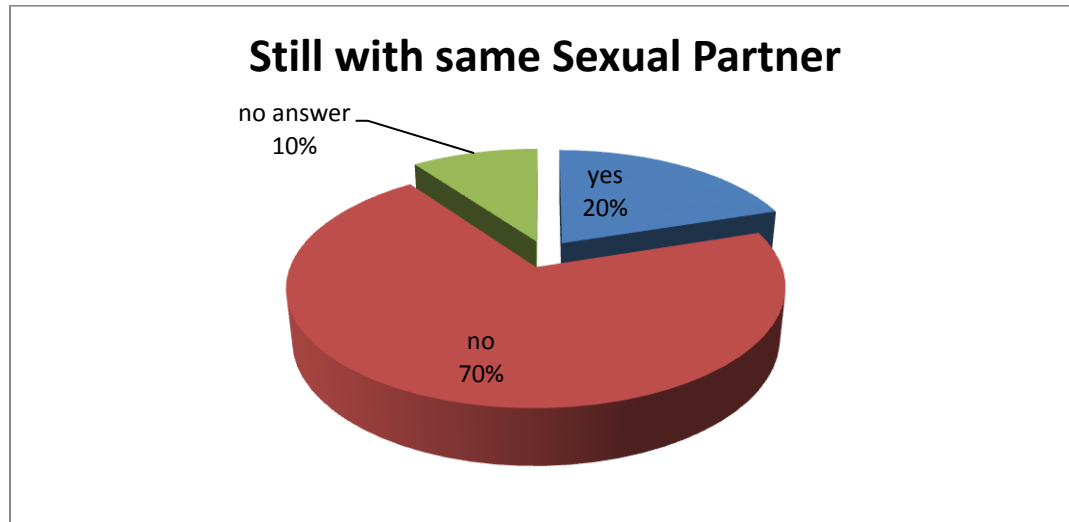


Figure 4.6: Still with sexual partner of first sexual encounter

Figure 4.7 shows that fifty five percent (55%) of the respondents reported that they have had less than five sexual partners, with thirty five percent (35%) reporting more than five sexual partners but less than ten and five percent (5%) reported having between eleven and fifteen sexual partners.

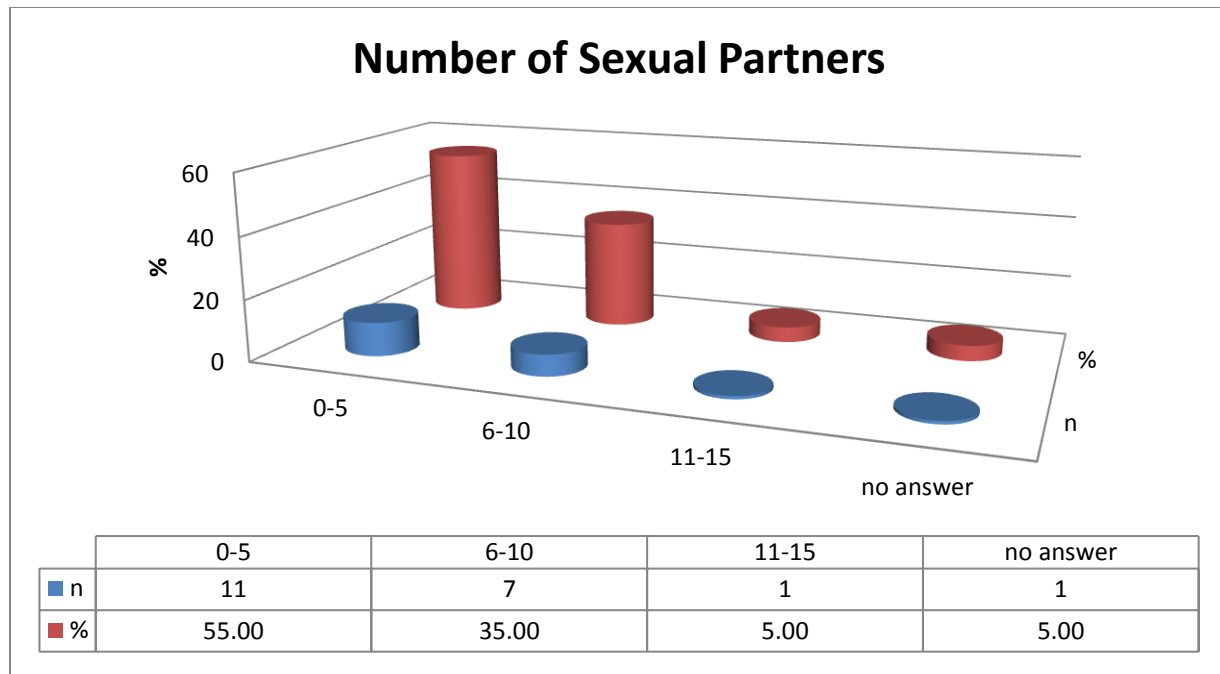


Figure 4.7: Number of Sexual Partners

Forty five percent (45%) of the respondents reported as having multiple sexual partners at the same period of time and fifty percent (50%) reported that they didn't have multiple sexual partners at the same period of time. Five percent (5%) of respondents didn't answer this question.

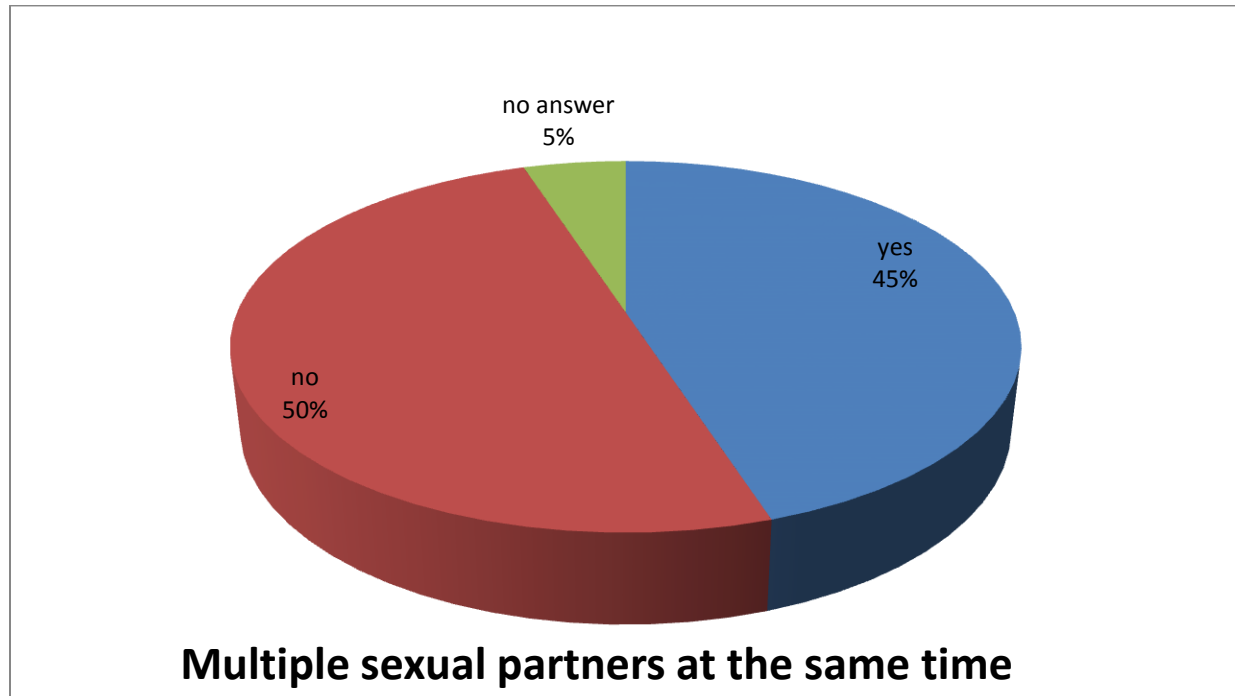


Figure 4.8: Multiple Sexual Partners at the same time

Figure 4.9 shows that fifty percent (50%) of the respondents chooses boyfriends that are between one and five years older than the respondents and twenty five percent (25%) choose boyfriends between six and ten years older and fifteen percent (15%) choose boyfriend that are older by ten years.

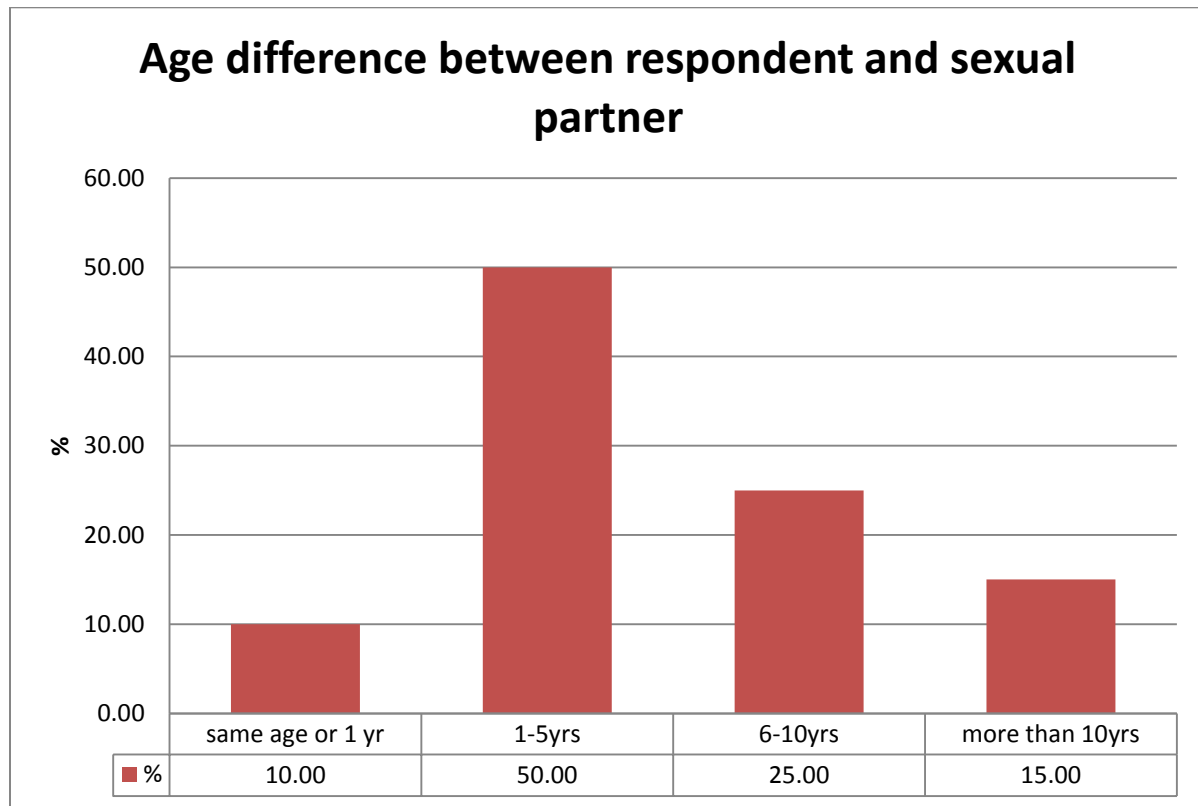


Figure 4.9: Age difference between respondents and boyfriends

When asked what are the reasons for choosing an older boyfriend thirty percent (30%) responded that older boyfriend are mature in thinking, with thirty five percent (35%) reporting that older boyfriends are more financially secure and five percent (5%) reporting that older boyfriends are emotionally stronger. Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents reported that older boyfriends are more mature in thinking, plus financially secure plus emotionally stronger. And fifteen percent (15%) of respondents didn't answer the question. See figure 4.10 for illustration.

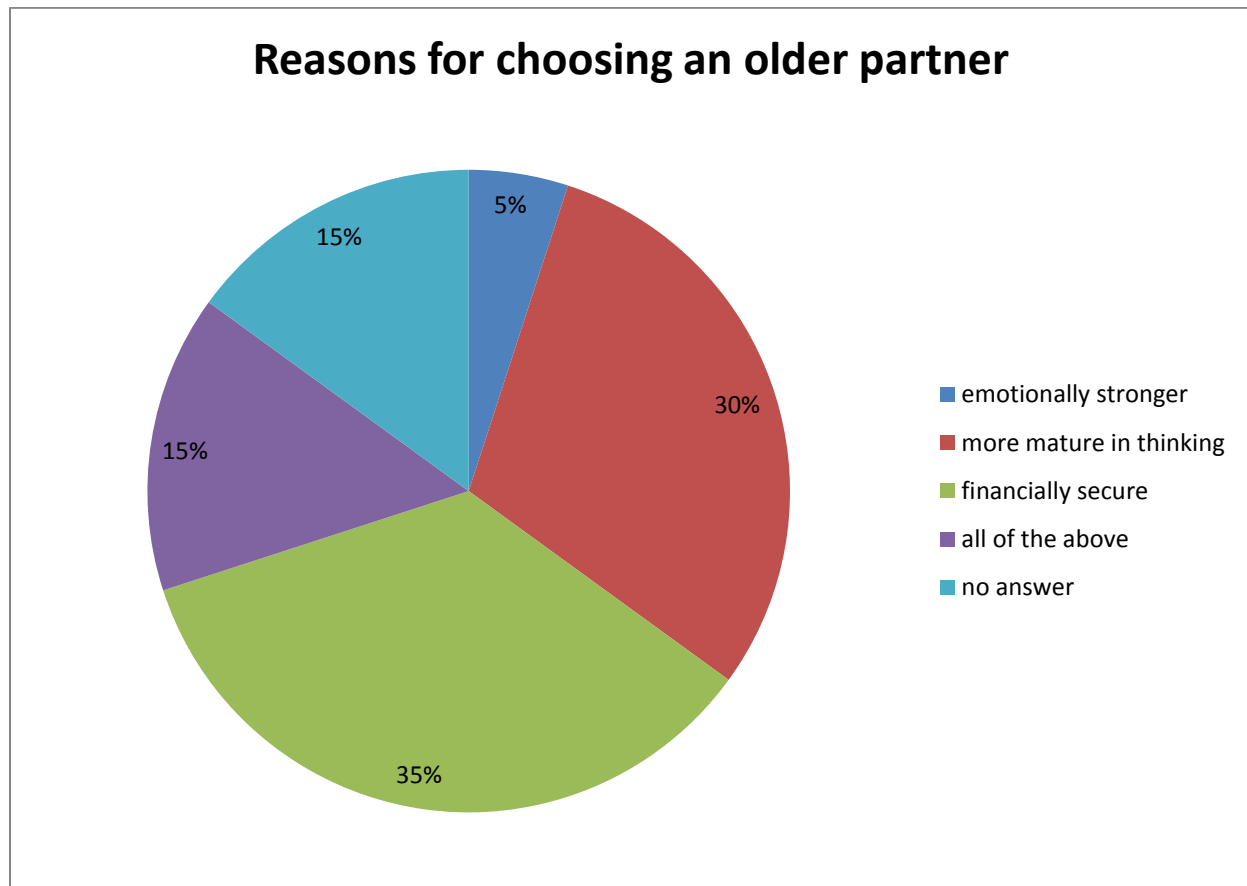


Figure 4.10: Reasons for choosing an older partner

Figure 4.11 illustrates what expenses are covered by the respondent's boyfriends. Fifty percent (50%) of respondents reported that their boyfriends pay for entertainment expenses which include going out to parties or night clubs and going out to restaurants. Forty percent (40%) of respondents reported that their boyfriends cover entertainment expenses as well as the purchasing of clothes. Five percent (5%) of respondents reported that their boyfriends cover clothing expenses and five percent (5%) did not answer this question.

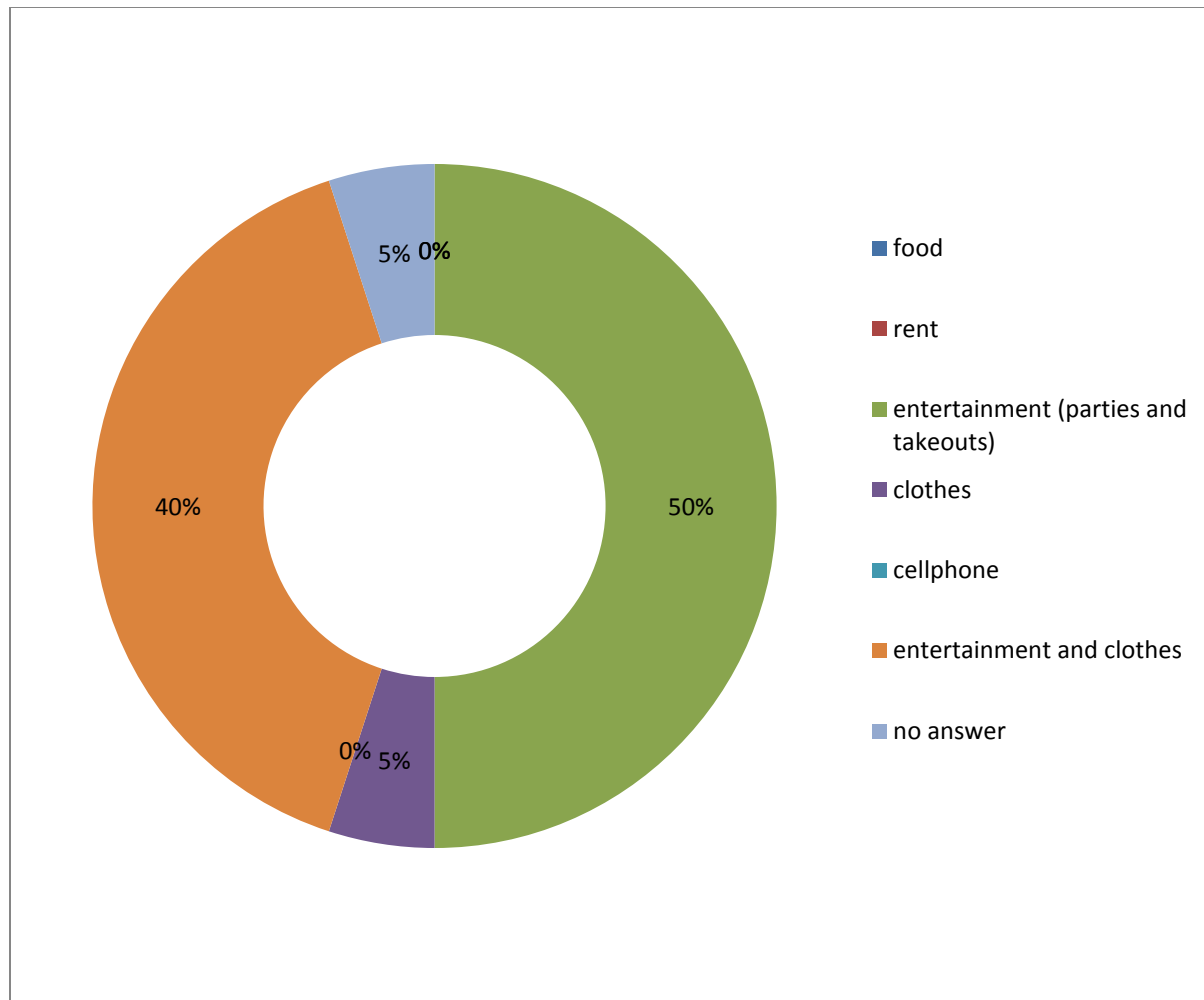


Figure 4.11: Expenses covered by boyfriend

Figure 4.12 shows that forty five (45%) of respondents will consider giving a guy a sexual favour for a material benefit. Thirty five percent of respondents reported that they would not consider giving a guy a sexual favour for material benefits and twenty percent of respondents did not answer this question.

Figure 4.1: Respondents who will consider giving a guy a sexual favour for a material benefit

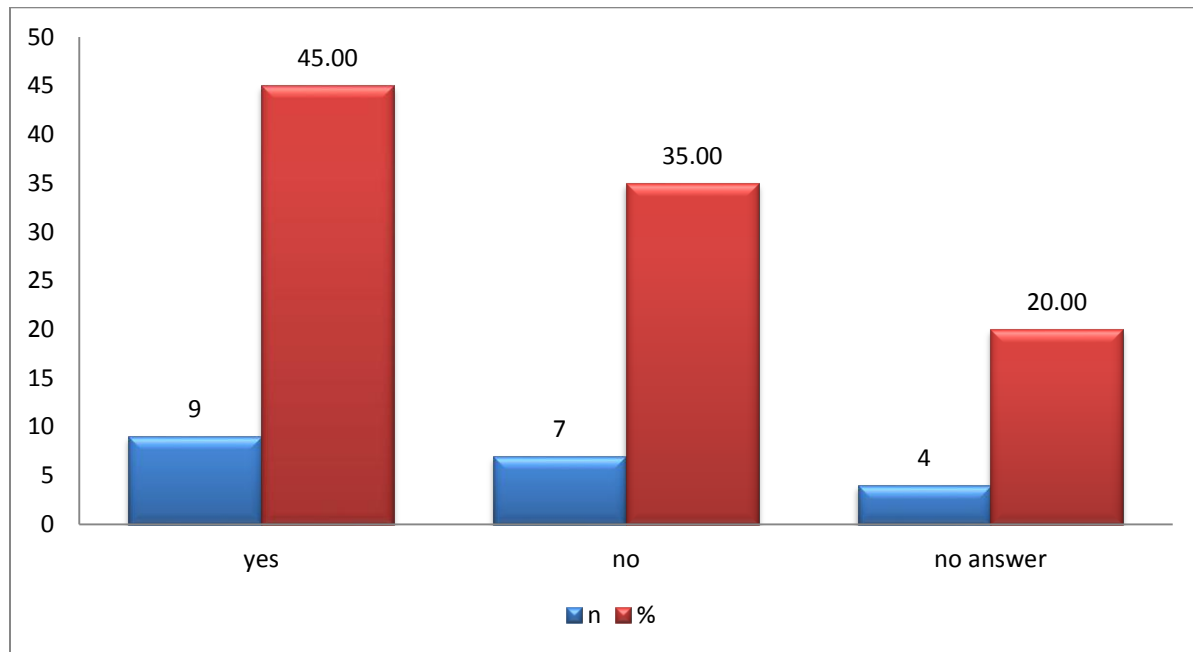


Figure 4.12: Respondents who will consider giving a guy a sexual favour for a material benefit

Figure 4.13 shows that eleven percent (11%) of respondents will consider a sexual favour for a night out on the town, another eleven percent (11%) reported that they would consider a sexual favour for money and seventy eight percent (78%) of respondents reported that they would consider sexual favours for a night out on the town plus receiving money plus buying branded clothes.

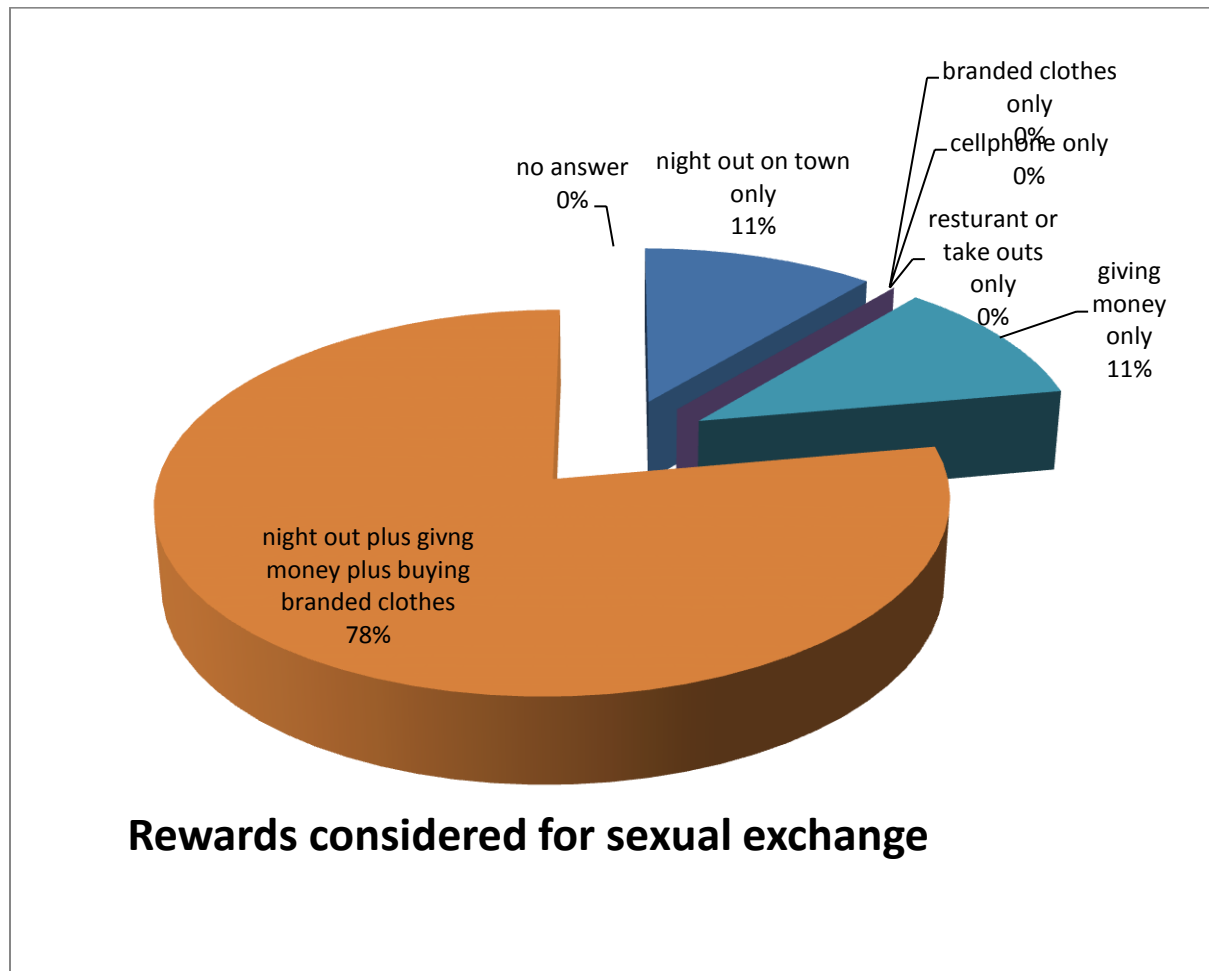


Figure 4.13: Rewards that would be considered for a sexual exchange

Figure 4.14 and 4.15 shows that ninety percent of girls know other girls who would consider this sexual exchange also with sixty percent of these girls being friends and ten percent (10%) being work colleagues, and twenty percent said these would be other people in Sunnyside that they did not consider friend.

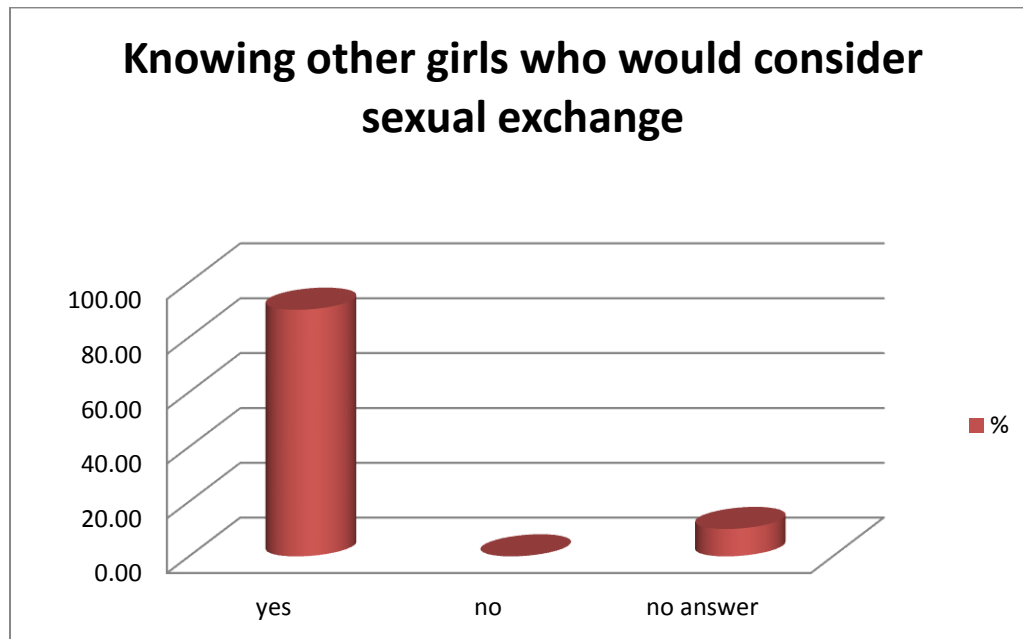


Figure 4.14: Respondents knowing other girls who would consider a sexual exchange

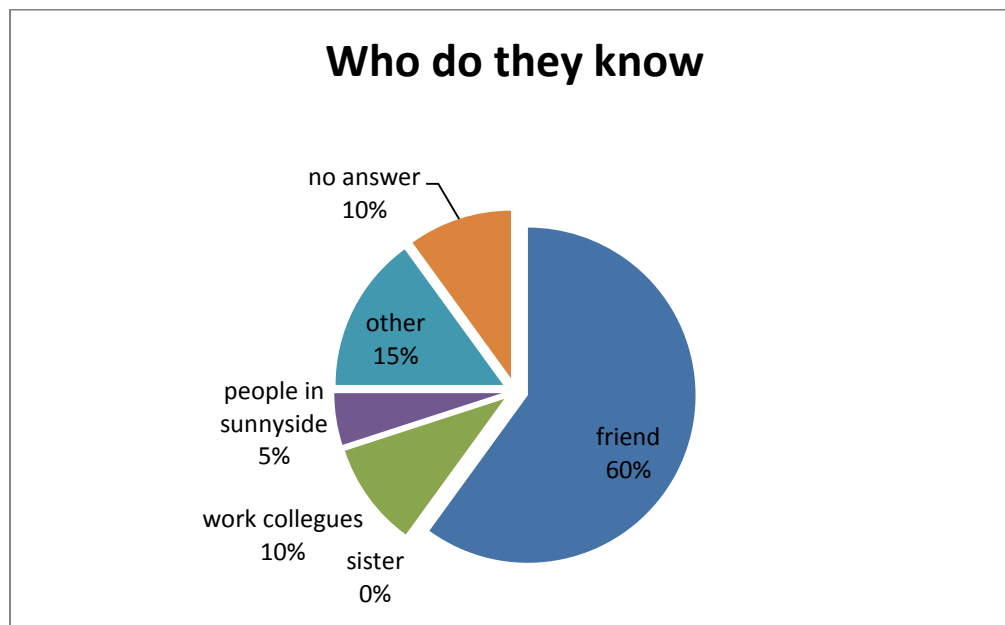


Figure 4.15: Other girls that respondents know that would consider a sexual exchange

Figure 4.16 shows that ninety five percent (95%) of respondents reported that guys expect sexual favours from girls when they offer material benefits and Figure 4.17 shows that eighty percent of respondents reported that guys prefer sexual favours without condoms.

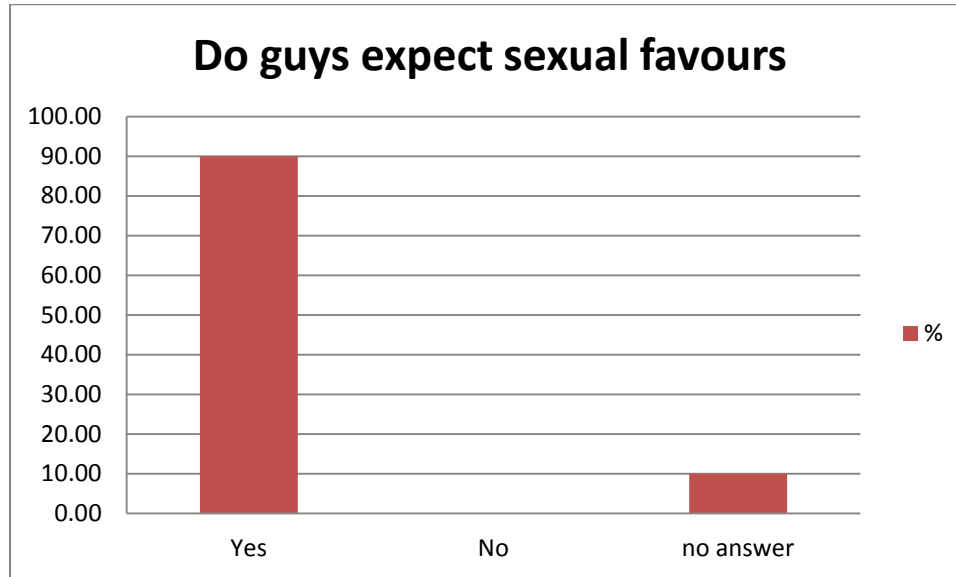


Figure 4.16: Do guys expect sexual favours for giving a girl material benefits

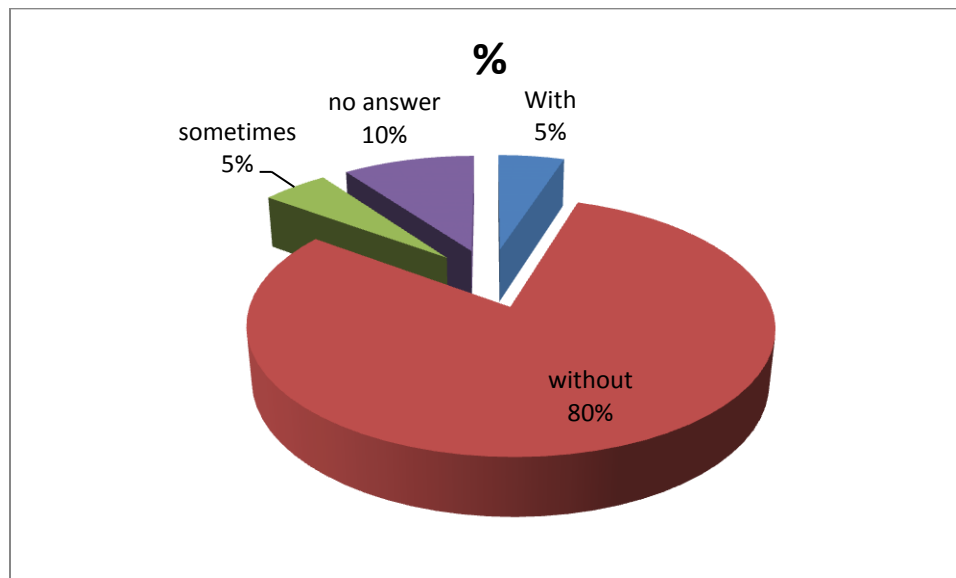


Figure 4.17: Do guys expect sexual favours with or without condoms

According to Figure 4.18 sixty five percent (65%) of respondents reported that guys are willing to use condoms if asked, and twenty percent of respondents reported that guys would consider wearing condoms sometimes and five percent reported that guys are not willing to use condoms.

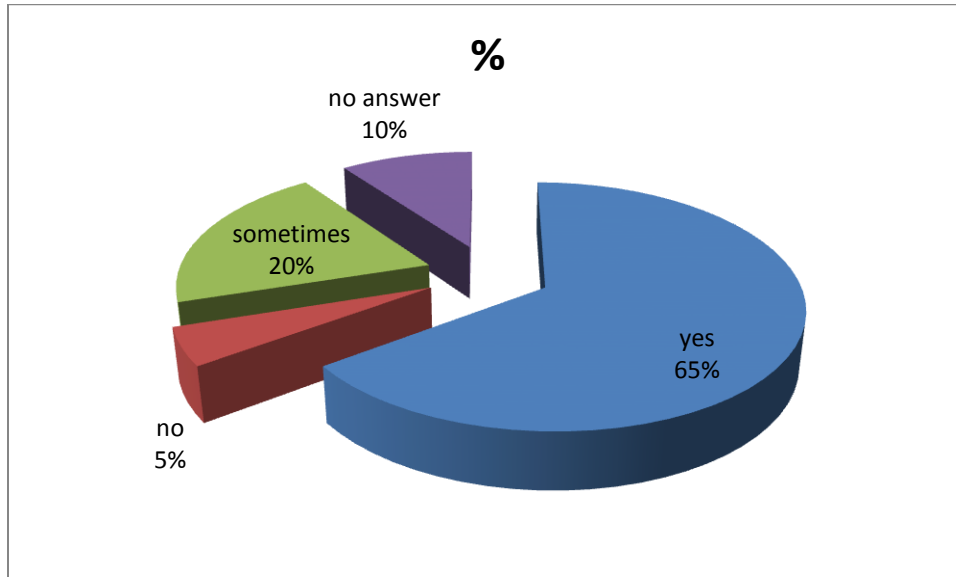


Figure 4.18: Are guys willing to use condoms if asked

Figure 4.19 shows that seventy percent (70%) of respondents reported that there is a strong possibility of a guy turning violent if a sexual favour is refused. Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents didn't know if a guy would turn violent and five percent (5%) reported maybe there is a possibility of a guy turning violent. Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents didn't answer this question.

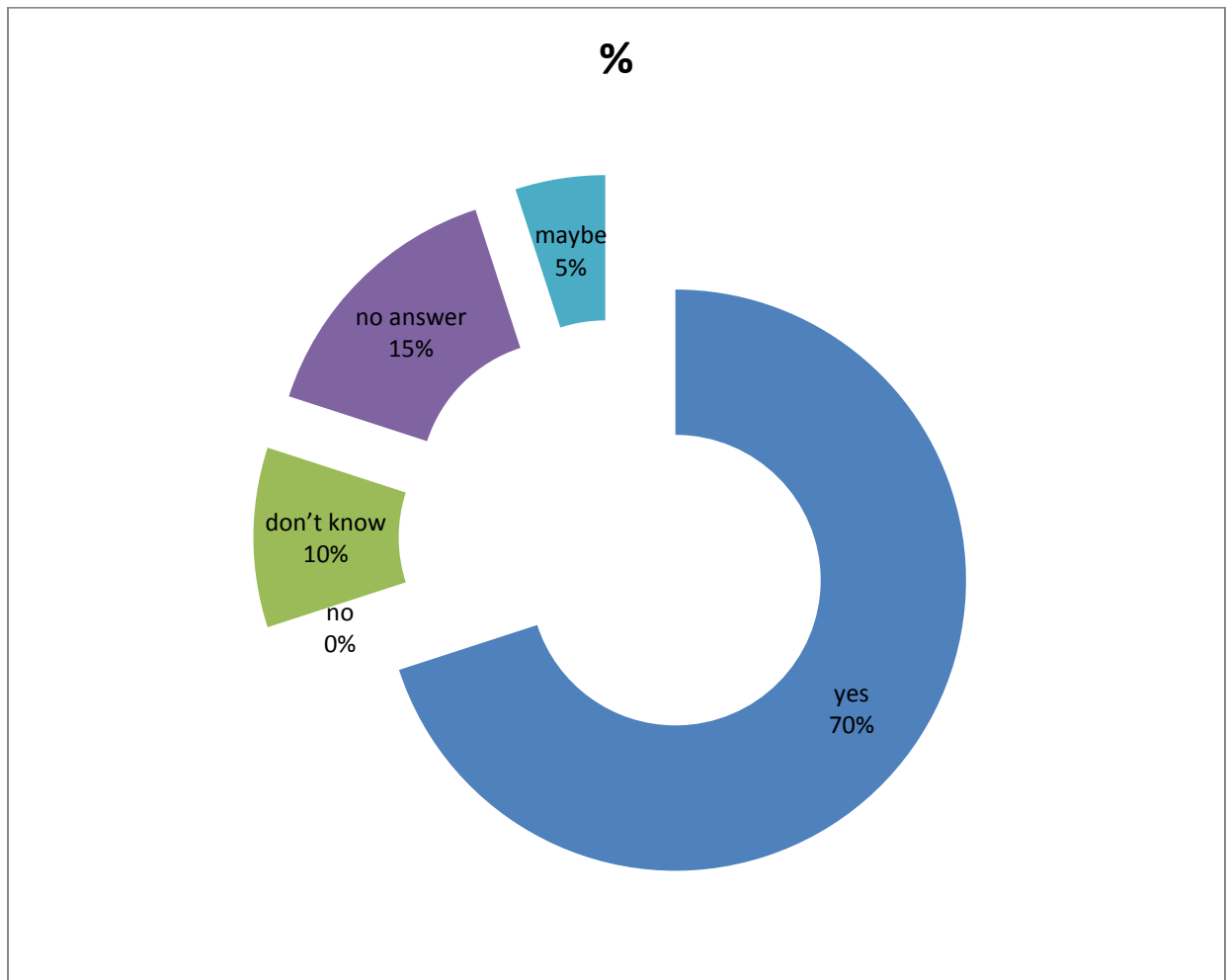


Figure 4.19: Is there a possibility of guys becoming violent if sexual favour is refused

Chapter 5: Discussion

Understanding the sexual behaviour of young women and men is a fundamental area in the response to mitigating impacts of HIV/AIDS. This study has shown that the circumstances in which the sexual encounter happens is complex but once understood would allow for appropriate interventions.

The focus of the transaction nature of sex, or the sexual exchange has been the focus of this study and very interesting data been surfaced. With all the HIV programming that exists, this study highlights that the young women does not necessarily take this HIV programming into account during the sexual encounter.

Does the transactional nature of sex exist in Sunnyside?

This study has shown that forty five percent (45%) of the respondents will consider giving a guy a sexual favour for a material benefit and ninety percent (90%) of these young women know other young women including their friends who would consider this same sexual exchange.

Looking at this from the opposite side, these young women make the case that men come into this transaction knowing full well that if men offer a material benefit there is an expectation of a sexual favour from the young women receiving the material benefit. Ninety percent of the women from the study attributed to this, “Guys expect a sexual favour for giving a girl a material benefit”. Also seventy percent (70%) of young women reported that guys would turn violent if sexual demands were not met.

What are the reasons young girls will engage in transactional sex?

The results from this study show most young women that participated in the study migrated to Sunnyside and were supported by families. It also shows that these women do not come from impoverished families but families that afford to take care of basic needs, of shelter and food of these young women in Sunnyside.

The amount of finances that it required per month in addition to basic needs being met varies between one thousand Rands to more than more than five thousand Rands, with one respondent

stating twenty thousand Rands. This money is required for lifestyle expenses such as clothing, entertainment, transport, cellphone expenses and beauty treatments.

Even though sixty percent of the young women in the study receive additional finances through having a job, twenty percent of these women also receive money from a boyfriend.

Also ninety percent of these young women reported that their boyfriends pay for entertainment and clothing expenses. Seventy eight percent (78%) of young women reported that they would consider giving a guy a sexual favour for a night out to parties plus receiving money plus receiving branded clothes for that guy.

This shows that young women are engaging in transactional sex not from the perspective of “helpless victim” trying to **meet basic needs** of food and shelter, but more as a “predatory agency” trying to **meet wants** of clothing, cash and entertainment.

Establishing the extent of knowledge of risky sexual behaviour

Risky behaviour

Early Debut of Sex and pre-marital sex: A delay in the debut of first sexual encounter is one of three major factors in reducing vulnerabilities of young women to HIV infection, teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Results from the study show that the average age of the sexual encounter being seventeen years old, during high school years. All young women in study have engaged in pre-marital sexual encounters.

Multiple sexual partners: The greater the number of sexual partners young people have, the greater their potential exposure to HIV will be, therefore limiting the number of sexual partners is the second major factor in reducing vulnerabilities of young women to HIV/AIDS and from this study forty five percent (45%) of young women have reported being in relationships with multiple sexual partners.

The evidence from this study does not show whether the transactional nature of the sex encourages the early debut of sex or multiple sexual partners.

Sex without a condom: Having sexual intercourse with a condom is the third major factor in reducing vulnerabilities of young women to HIV/AIDS and from this study eighty percent of young women reported that men expect sexual favours without a condom due to the transactional nature of the sexual encounter. However sixty five percent of young women reported that a guy would consider using a condom if asked. This data shows that neither the young women from this study nor the men in relationships with these young take into account the serious implications of sex without a condom and therefore at risk of contracting HIV.

Age disparate relationships: Age differences between young people and their sexual partners have been hypothesized to increase the risk of HIV for young people. Older partners are more likely to have been exposed to HIV than partners of the same age group and among South African youth, older male partners may be members of age cohorts with the highest levels of HIV infection (RHRU, 2004). Thirty five percent of young women in the study are in relationship with men that are older by six years and fifteen percent are in relationship with men that are older by ten years. Financial security and more mature in thinking were reasons that most of the young women picked for being a relationship with an older man. These older men are probably working or in business and therefore can offer a young more financial security as opposed to a young man of twenty two, who is probably still studying.

Entertainment of going out to parties and night clubs feature quite high on the agenda of these young women many saying they would consider offering a sexual favour for going out to parties. Many find themselves being in a situation of being under the influence of alcohol when the sexual exchange is negotiated – this could be a reason for these young women reporting violence when sexual favours not met and not taking the risk of HIV because of the influence of alcohol and not insisting on the use of a condom.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

This study highlights an area of sexual behaviour of young women that explains why HIV statistics remain high. This study establishes that transactional sex does exist in Sunnyside and that young women who reside in Sunnyside will engage in transactional sex for cash, clothes and entertainment. The reasons that the young girls engage in transactional sex is not to meet basic needs but more for meeting lifestyle expenses or wants. Entertainment comes out as a major reason for the engagement in transactional sex.

The evidence from this study does not show whether the transactional nature of the sex encourages the early debut of sex or multiple sexual partners however the data shows that the material benefits of transactional nature of sex allows young women to have sex without a condom and pursue older men as sexual partners.

The risks associated with HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies or contracting sexually transmitted diseases are not considered as immediate threats or harm. Lifestyle benefits and being entertained seems to be higher on women's agenda.

Also, it seems that the power dynamic of men being in a more powerful position than these young ladies, causes these young ladies not to insist on condom use at all times.

Unless young women understand and start taking the risks associated with transactional sex seriously, more and more young women will be endangering their lives.

Recommendations:

1. Young women need to be made aware of the risks associated with transactional sex.
2. Empowerment of young women in negotiating sexual experiences.
3. Empowerment of young women in respecting themselves and understanding their self worth. And maybe aiming at the younger age group of 12-15 years to make the next generation stronger in resisting this trend of sexual behaviour.
4. Encourage young women to pursue a career to afford them the lifestyles they desire instead of using their bodies to gain a livelihood.
5. HIV/AIDS programming needs to be done in a way that addresses the social issues of sexual behaviour.

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